

U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (U.S.-CAEF) Enterprise Student Fellowships is an undergraduate business education scholarship program for academically gifted students sponsored by the U.S.-Central Asia Education Foundation (The Foundation) & administered by American Councils for International Education. The Foundation, in partnership with the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek (AUCA) & the KIMEP University in Almaty, provides educational opportunities in business and other activities for students from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan & Uzbekistan to cultivate a principled entrepreneurial environment in Central Asia that fosters the growth of free enterprise & open markets.



Interns with Senator Lugar at U.S.- CAEF Reception on Capitol Hill
From left to right: Parvina, Artyom, Khislat, Kuralay, Inara & Andrey

CAPSTONE IMPACT

On December 14 the second group of Capstone fellows completed their international internship program administered by American Councils in partnership with The Washington Center (TWC) in Washington, DC. The quotes below reflect the interns' thoughts about their program experiences.

Andrey Leskin

AUCA, Turkmenistan / MicroVest

The internship experience in Washington was a very important part of my career development. It is during that period in America when I improved my communication skills and, what is more important, dove into the ocean of corporate life and the western work atmosphere. I was able to discover the basics of a new sphere of microfinance investments and now am thinking of focusing on this subject for my master's thesis with application to the Central Asian region.

Inara Zakirova

AUCA, Kyrgyzstan / Study Sparkz

While interning in the marketing department of Study Sparkz, I gained not only professional skills and knowledge but also learned life lessons about human relations, about being strong enough not to take everything personally. I was also lucky to meet people to admire for their accomplishments and who made my experience in the U.S. enjoyable and brought many positive moments to my life. Thanks to this program, I also became closer with my fellow Capstone interns who became my friends.

IN THIS ISSUE ▼

📌 CAPSTONE IMPACT

U.S. internship experiences
of our Fellows
-page 1

📌 UNITY IS STRENGTH

Welcoming freshmen at KIMEP
-page 2

📌 THANKSGIVING

AUCA senior Fellows' treat
-page 3

📌 DIVERSITY WEEK

at AUCA
-page 4

📌 MEET OUR LEADERS:

- Interviews with Bermet Dzhumadilova & Yerzhan Smagulov
 - U.S.-CAEF Fellows are Vice presidents of AIESEC
- page 4

📌 FROM IDEAS TO ACTION

Saidkabar Organizes First
TEDx Conference
in Tajikistan
-page 6

📌 INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Exchange students: Ignat Kim,
Nursultan Abdukhalilov
& Nazokat Omuralieva
-page 8

📌 CAREER CORNER

Interview with Arystan
Moldabekov
-page 9

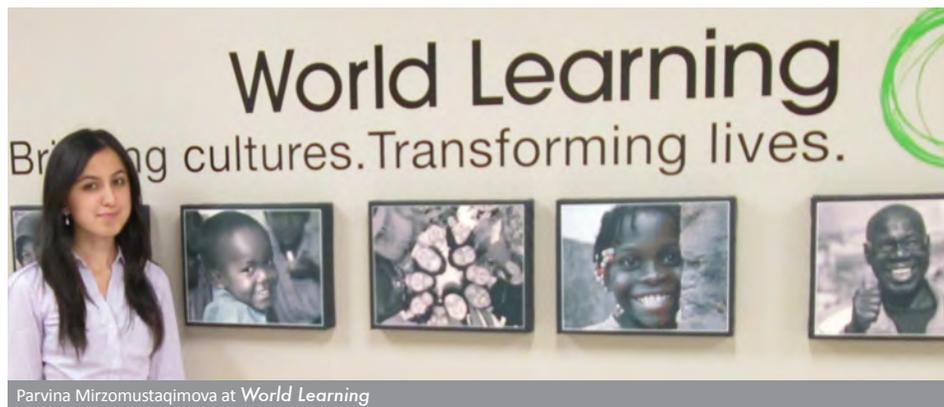
📌 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Kicks off with
successful activities
-page 10

Parvina Mirzomustaqimova

KIMEP, Tajikistan / World Learning

The Washington experience is one of the most unforgettable events in my life and will be imprinted in my memory forever. During this time I managed to know and fall in love with the business and cultural life of this remarkable city. During my internship at World Learning I learned not only to work professionally in my sphere of interest, but I was also introduced to an amicable workplace culture. I believe that this experience will make an invaluable contribution to my future career path.



Parvina Mirzomustaqimova at World Learning

Artyom Bakulin

KIMEP, Turkmenistan / U.S. Small Business Administration

"I learned a lot about US governmental business practices, definitely got new knowledge and skills, obtained useful work experience, met many new people, made lots of good friends, and increased my networking connections. This program has definitely changed me for the better. The program was frequently so intensive... that I was leaving my apartment at 8:00 in the morning and coming back home only late at night. Even though I spent a lot of time preparing for the CFA: Level I examination, I can definitely say that at the same time I was actively involved in other educational, charitable, and environmental projects and activities around DC, and I also visited many museums, theatres, national monuments, and other attractions. In my opinion the Capstone Internship Program was the best way for me to experience the lifestyle of the U.S. nation's capital, one of the best culturally and politically driven cities in the world. I would like to encourage all current KIMEP and AUCA senior students to apply for this program to get this unique opportunity for a life changing experience in the fall 2013."

Kuralay Baisalbayeva

KIMEP, Kazakhstan / The Urban Institute

The most useful component of the academic part of the Washington Center experience was writing an individual development plan which helped me set up short-term and long-term goals in the career path that fits me best. I feel fully prepared for future job challenges-- a professional resume, knowledge of writing winning cover letters, practice in mock interviews, and effective networking tips, job search, and salary negotiating techniques.

I remember the Washington Center as a "melting pot" of bright, intelligent, and inspiring young professionals from over 17 countries. The most memorable event was the International Festival. The fiery Mexican and Panamanian dances, touching Spanish songs, charming Chinese tea ceremony, the heartwarming Kyrgyz song, Indian Bollywood dancers and exciting Kazakh traditional dance will stay in our memories for the rest of our lives. And we were proud that Central Asian countries took 2nd place in the international food contest!



Kuralay with her friend from Puerto Rico

UNITY IS STRENGTH

by Monandniso Tursunova, KIMEP



Recently, there was a great team building event for U.S.-CAEF fellows organized by the U.S.-CAEF Student Association, and almost all U.S.-CAEF fellows attended the event. The first part involved icebreakers which helped fellows get to know each other closer-- games and a photo session which yielded plenty of funny and memorable pictures. After a discussion of future extracurricular events and projects, there was a yummy moment with delicious pizzas! It was an unforgettable event when U.S.-CAEF fellows looked like one big family. Since this

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MONANDNISO
TURSUNOVA

I am a second-year student in the business program. As part of KIMEP's student life, I joined many student organizations at KIMEP. International Debate Club is one of them, in which I take the Event-Manager position.

This gives me an opportunity to be a part of amazing student life and experiences at KIMEP.

was the first event for the freshmen, they were particularly excited. In her interview to the U.S.-CAEF Newsletter Chynara Erkulova, President of the U.S.-CAEF Student Association said: "At this event we've achieved our main goal-- to unite U.S.-CAEF new fellows with elder ones. Special thanks to volunteers, Gozel Ilmuradova, Aisuluu Abdyrakhmanova and Rustam Vahobov for helping organize this event. We were also able to gather a design team of creative and responsible people, who will be helping us out in coming events. This spring semester we are planning to have many projects like Secret Pal Gathering close to Valentine's Day, Frisbee Tournament with International Food Festival in April, photo-master class and follow-up exhibition 'Happiness Through Your Eyes', Joint AUCA-KIMEP event, and a trip to Almarasan".



Chynara Erkulova, President of U.S.-CAEF Student Association

CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING AT AUCA

by Ulukbek Abdubaliev, AUCA



Organizers of Thanksgiving celebration



Thanksgiving Event-activities

U.S.-CAEF senior Fellows, **Azhar Akimbaeva**, **Bermet Nurbekova** and **Izat Osmonov**, came up with an idea to celebrate Thanksgiving with their U.S.-CAEF family on November 22. The purpose of this event was to bring all U.S.-CAEF fellows together and welcome the freshmen. The organizers did their best to make this celebration unforgettable and enjoyable for every Fellow. All students were asked to wear something green, the U.S.-CAEF color. Those who did not follow this dress code had to pay a penalty—sing a song, or dance. Fellows participated in ice-breakers, skits and other fun activities. "The whole day was full of intellectual games, dances, and, of course, a lot of thanks and wishes. The funniest and at the same time the most wonderful activity was when the fellows performed short sketches about CAEF life. It was really wonderful to see how fellows cooperate to share ideas with each other. The sketches brought lots of laugh and fun, and showed that our fellows are really friendly and creative", commented Ulukbek Abdubaliev.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

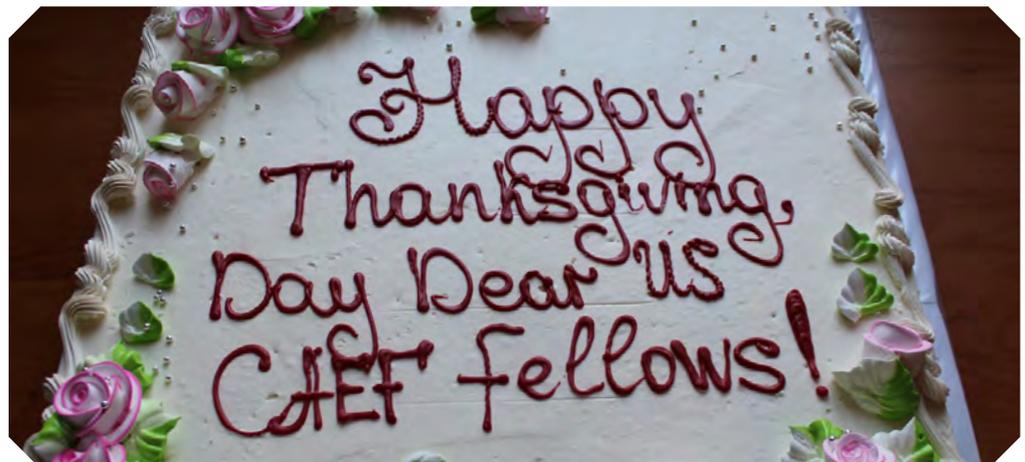


ULUKBEK ABDUBALIEV

I am a sophomore of Business Administration department. Last year I participated in the international student conference in Smolny university in St. Petersburg. It was a great experience for me, as I could share my thoughts about global problems with students from different countries. This year I became a member of AIESEC international student organization. For me AIESEC is a great opportunity to enhance leadership, communication and presentation skills. Besides studies and university activities, I like playing football, chess and solving Rubik's Cube. I am really proud to be called a fellow of U.S.-CAEF. It changed my vision of life and gave me a lot of opportunities.

"It was a really amazing day with lots of positive emotions. I think we created that warm, friendly atmosphere that we were planning to. Everybody was smiling and hugging each other which made us really happy. Moreover, I want to emphasize that it was a great experience for us to organize this teambuilding event!"

-Azhar Akimbaeva
(one of the organizers)



DIVERSITY WEEK AT AUCA

by Aliya Sultanova, AUCA



Nazokat Omuralieva (second left), Andrew B. Wachtel, President of AUCA

Diversity Week held on January 22-25 was a great opportunity to celebrate the increasing diversity of the AUCA community. Everybody was guaranteed to get tons of impressions and emotions from the talent show, various activities and tasting traditional food prepared by students and faculty.

Fourteen delegations of students representing different cultures participated in the event. Day 1 featured cultural performances and skits based on the cartoon "Madagascar", Day 2 was devoted to national cuisines--most dishes were prepared by students themselves and some by restaurant chefs; flash mob videos were shown on Day 3; and finally, Day 4 included the final gala concert at the National Opera and Ballet Theater.

Our U.S.-CAEF fellows also participated in the event. Malika Ibragimova represented the Dungan, Nazokat Omuralieva the Uzbek, and Dildana Abbasova the Uighur minorities.



Dildana Abbasova (green dress)

MEET OUR LEADERS:

Interview with Bermet Dzhumadilova, PR for the AUCA Senate

By Makhabat Tashbaltava, AUCA

Makhabat: Bermet, why did you decide to run for the Senate? Did someone advise you to take part in this?

Bermet: First of all, I want to experience the life of AUCA fully. AUCA is not only the place for studies but also it is the best place where you can expand your talents, where you can do many extra-curricular activities, and fully expand another side of personality. I wanted to show who really I am and what I can do. My friends advised me to run for this election. Also my desire to contribute to the life of students influenced my decision.

Makhabat: How was the campaign? What kind of tools did you use to get more attention?

Bermet: My idea was to organize a campaign called "Get fresh ideas from freshman". I walked around and offered slices of fruit to students. In return they were supposed to give me their suggestions on how to make AUCA student's life better. It was very funny and I got a lot of fresh ideas from students.

Makhabat: Were you afraid to lose?

Bermet: To be honest I was sure that I would win, but there was a little fear. Once I saw a video on youtube.com about how a person should overcome his fears and how many positive impressions he will get afterwards. This little but very meaningful moment gave me courage not to give up.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



ALIYA SULTANOVA

I grew up in Bishkek. My parents as well as most of my relatives are teachers, which makes my foray into Economics something of a novelty for them.

After graduating Turkish high school, I enrolled in the economics department at American University of Central Asia in 2010. As an undergrad, I interned at Kyrgyz Concept, a leading tourist company. I also worked at McDonald's in the US.

I'm interested in debates on economics. I'm interested in banking and international projects, and hopefully, I will engage in these spheres in the future.

I spent a couple years in the dance section of the "Jashtyk", learning the challenges of choreography. In my free time, I enjoy running, swimming, live music, reading, and baking.

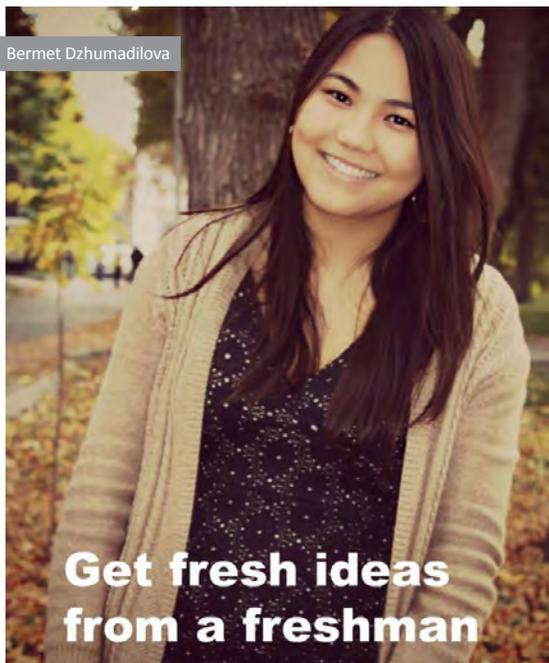
ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MAKHABAT TASHBALTAEVA

I am a freshman from AUCA's Business Administration Department. I like this department because Spirit of Entrepreneurship motivates me to be a winner.

Bermet Dzhumadilova



Get fresh ideas from a freshman

Makhabat: Could you tell us about the senate and describe your role?

Bermet: At the AUCA senate I am a PR committee representative. My responsibility is to notify students about all activities organized by the senate. I love this work. It gives me an opportunity to meet new people and to learn many things. Recently we worked on a fundraising project. We were looking for sponsors for students who need scholarships. I like doing such activities, because I can help someone to achieve his/her dream.

Makhabat: You are a FLEX alumna. Were you involved in a student senate in the U.S.? Do you think this experience will contribute to your professional life?

Bermet: Yes, last year I studied at Coronado High School, where I also was a member of the senate. I was an event manager. It was a useful experience which I can apply now in my present position. This experience gives me an opportunity to build my network, and in the business world networking is very important.

Interview with Yerzhan Smagulov, Vice-President of KIMEP Student Association

By Kristina Fateyeva, KIMEP



Yerzhan Smagulov, Vice-President of KIMEP Student Association

I love KIMEP University for its creativity and uniqueness in terms of academics, sports, and social life. I strongly believe that we study at #1 university in the region.

Kristina: Why did you decide to apply for KSA? Please describe briefly the process of applying and being elected as a KSA member.

Yerzhan: I think that during their college years people should develop themselves and be active. I chose KSA because it is the most serious organization on campus and gives lots of creativity for students.

As for the process, you fill out an application with information about yourself, your GPA (it should be above 2.67), and the position for which you are applying. Then you have to collect at least 40 signatures in your support. Afterwards, there are elections: ballot papers, ballot booths, and a professors' committee. This is a very challenging process. In the end, there were 3 candidates and the biggest competition was for my position.

Kristina: In your current position, what responsibilities do you find the hardest and the easiest ones? Are you involved in any other extracurricular events at KIMEP or outside of KIMEP?

Yerzhan: It was hard to push myself to apply. I was afraid of the responsibility I would have to take. All the rest was easy and plus most of student body supports you. It is not such hard work, really. As for other activities, I help KIMEP organizations with such events as charity events, parties, etc., and I am also a deputy of the Youth Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Kristina: Yerzhan, please tell us about yourself.

Yerzhan: I am a junior in the Business Administration Department majoring in Finance, a FLEX alumnus and a former Vice-President of the U.S.-CAEF Student Association. Currently I hold the position of the Vice-President of Finance at KIMEP Student Association (KSA).

In addition, I have the title of the "champion of CIS in karate do", black belt. I love active lifestyle and have been involved in sports and student life. I value such qualities as simplicity and sincerity in people.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



KRISTINA FATEYEVA

U.S.- CAEF gave me a lot of opportunities and still does. I had a chance to be a VP of Internal Relations for the CAEF Student Association at KIMEP the first year my co-scholars established it and later became President of it. CAEF is not only a Foundation for students from all over Central Asia to get bachelor's degrees. CAEF is an opportunity to make students' dreams come true. The trainings and speakers CAEF provides for its students and the excellent opportunity to become an intern in great companies and organizations are life-changing.

Kristina: How do you manage to be so active and to keep a good GPA? Do you think the experience at KSA will help you in the future? What are your future plans?

Yerzhan: I try to manage my time effectively. It only seems that you do not have free time. You can do a lot of things if you do not spend much time on internet and watching movies. I also find time to go out and party. I am just like everyone else. I think the experience is very helpful. It gives a good opportunity for developing leadership and communication skills. And of course as I am going to work in the finance area, this will be a plus on my resume.

After graduating from KIMEP, I would like to work for a few years and then apply for Master's studies. Later I want to open my own business or to work for government.

Kristina: What advice can you give to current U.S.-CAEF Fellows?

Yerzhan: I would advise to try everything. We are young and we already need to start looking for opportunities for future career. Develop yourself, do sports, read and laugh more. Time is water, don't waste it.

U.S.-CAEF Fellows Become Vice Presidents of AIESEC

—By Ulukbek Abdulaliev, AUCA

On January 13 AIESEC, an international student organization, held elections for its 2013-2014 Executive Board. It's an exciting news that **Meruert Dzuma-gulova** became the Vice President for Communication and PR, **Alisher Mamunov** the Vice President of Global Internship program, and **Ulukbek Abdulaliev** the Vice-President of Outgoing Exchange for Global Community Development program. After Election Day, the fellows shared their impressions:

"It was an amazing day that will surely impact my whole life", said Ulukbek. "It is a great opportunity to develop my leadership skills. Coordinating the work of 10 Bishkek universities, I will have a chance not only to lead a team, but also to interact with students with different backgrounds."

"It is a wonderful opportunity for me to apply my knowledge in marketing.... AIESECers are really motivated people. I am excited to see people who work without any material bonuses, but for own improvement and for development of others", says Meruert.

"I am very excited about being elected the Vice President of Global Internship program," shared Alisher, "it will help me grow up, as I haven't had anything to really challenge me so far. I want to develop my HR skills, selecting & sending the best interns from Kyrgyzstan. I can change the world only changing myself."

—Alisher Mamunov



Alisher Mamunov & Ulukbek Abdulaliev (from left to right)



Present in over 113 countries and territories and with over 86,000 members, AIESEC is the world's largest youth-run organization. Focused on providing a platform for youth leadership development, AIESEC offers young people the opportunity to participate in international internships, experience leadership and participate in a global learning environment. What makes AIESEC unique is the youth driven impactful experience that it offers to its members. AIESEC is run by young people for young people, enabling a strong experience to all its stakeholders.

From Ideas to Action: Saidkabar Organizes First TEDx Conference in Tajikistan

By Saidkabar Azizov, KIMEP

My success story began during my second year in KIMEP University while I was attending the TEDx KIMEP event organized by a group of active foreign exchange students. Their work has inspired me and made me think of possibly organizing a similar event in Dushanbe. TED lectures inspire people around the world with their innovative and fascinating ideas, and I thought the spirit of TED should also be known in Tajikistan. I shared the idea with my friend, Emadsho Akdod-

shoev. We took our first step by creating a Facebook group of "TEDxDushanbe". When our idea gained high popularity among the Tajik community on Facebook, the moment came when we started to recruit a team of responsible, ambitious, and successful young people of Tajikistan.

The next crucial step toward the organization of the TEDx Dushanbe was made by Parviz Jamalov, a TEDx

My motto is:

"Aspire Today, Inspire Tomorrow"



Saikabir Azizov making a presentation at the conference

Dushanbe Primary Licensee. Jamalov wrote a project proposal which was later approved by the TED Global Committee. The vital task was accomplished – we received the official license from TED to host the TEDx Dushanbe Event and planted the seeds of innovative TED ideas in Tajik soil for the first time.

But the license was just the signal for starting hard but rewarding work. We had to prepare convincing commercial proposals and use our own public speaking skills to obtain sponsorship for our project. It is worth emphasizing the massive support we have received from The Embassy of the United States in Tajikistan, the International Association of Tajik Entrepreneurs and, particularly, its president, Zaid Saidov, the TALCO Cables Industries and Dushanbe Serena Hotel for providing us a great venue. The noble support provided by our partners and sponsors has ignited a flame of encouragement in us, as we realized that our initiatives were well-received and supported in Tajikistan.

As we were marching towards project implementation, the need for enlarging our team became clear. We were fortunate to recruit Muhammad Mirzoev and Abdulhakim Hamrozoda to our team. Both Mirzoev and Hamrozoda used their incredible creativity and excellent knowledge in the field of IT and contributed a lot to the progress of TEDx Dushanbe. Mirzoev developed a modern website "www.tedxushanbe.tj", a significant tool without which the project could not be sustained.

As the day of the conference was approaching, we had to divide responsibilities in order to keep up with the deadline. While Akdodshoev was working with the speakers, Jamalov was busy with reviewing applications and sending out invitations. Meanwhile, I was able to recruit an incredible volunteer crew that provided precious help to us.

Enthusiastic, dedicated and hardworking, our volunteers were taking pictures, casting promo videos, helping with our PR campaign, and finally providing interpretation services during the conference. Our volunteers have become 'building hands' that have pushed our project to success.

More than 150 people attended the TEDx Dushanbe event creating a unique diverse audience. As our team put a special emphasis on motivating the youth of Tajikistan, our team members invited more than 80 young and socially active people to attend the event on application basis. The remaining seats were granted to the representatives of international embassies, foundations, organizations, public and non-governmental organizations, media, and the business community.

The key focus of the TEDx Dushanbe event was our speakers. Combining pre-recorded video messages and live talks, TEDx Dushanbe served as a proper platform not only for spreading innovative ideas but also to motivate the youth by presenting inspiring stories of those who have already succeeded. It is worth mentioning that our team strived to gather the specialists from different fields to broaden the scope of TED-talks. It was also our pride to have some prominent people of Tajikistan as guest speakers. Among them were Zaid Saidov, the President of the Tajik Entrepreneurs' Association, Jamshed Rahmonberdiev, the Head of Somon Capital, Sherali Jurabaev, the Director of Sky Central Asia and others. A Senior TED Fellow Alanna Shaikh, whose presentation about Alzheimer's disease and the growing youth population in Tajikistan and Central Asia were very informative.

The conference lasted for four hours and concluded with 'iftar', a traditional late dinner for Ramadan. It was held in the magnificent Serena garden where people could enjoy the variety of meals, watch several cultural performances, and listen to other TEDx speakers. A group photo session served as a vivid clincher for the TEDx Dushanbe Conference.

TEDx Dushanbe was the biggest event our team members and I have organized, and this experience gave me inspiration to work harder.

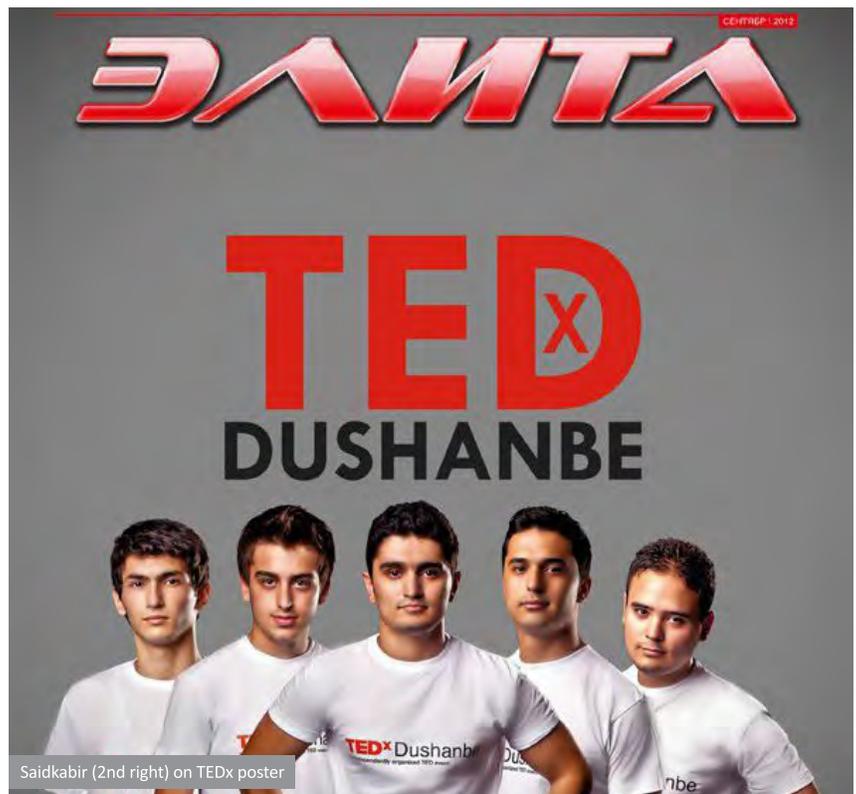


TED is a nonprofit devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. It started out as a conference bringing together people from three worlds: Technology, Entertainment, Design. Since then its scope has become ever broader.

In 2009 TED started granting licenses to third parties to organize independent TED-like events internationally.

TEDx was created in the spirit of TED's mission, "ideas worth spreading." The program is designed to give communities, organizations and individuals the opportunity to stimulate dialogue through TED-like experiences at the local level.

TEDx events are fully planned and coordinated independently, on a community-by-community basis.



Saikabir (2nd right) on TEDx poster

International Experiences of our AUCA Fellows

Ignat Kim

Koc University in Istanbul, Turkey

"The city of Istanbul is a huge metropolitan area where Europe and Asia bind together. The cultural mix makes Istanbul something more than just a city. Unlike other cities I've been to, Istanbul stands out by its history, people, and diverse atmosphere. It's an amazing feeling walking along the city streets that were there hundreds and hundreds years ago. At the same time Istanbul is a modern city. Two cultures live side by side, modern and old. The modern look is being brought by the economic boom. From a business student's perspective it was valuable to observe the businesses in Istanbul. It seems like people are making money on just about everything-- selling, trading or reselling. I guess that's why the city is expanding and developing so fast. Overall, this exchange gave me a lot, starting with academic achievements and cultural exchange ending with life-time connections. I enjoyed Istanbul a lot and wish to visit that city once more."



"What I liked about the university is the unique spirit. I felt very much like at home..."

Ignat Kim

Nursultan Abdukhalilov

Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea

"During my study in Kyung Hee I learned a lot about business and globalization. Business Communication class was the most interesting course for me because we discussed the negotiation styles of different countries and cultures. Being far from my motherland, I was able to see the problems of Kyrgyzstan from a different perspective. Moreover, I was able to compare the tax systems of the two countries. When I came back to Bishkek, I shared the information with the people who work in the tax sphere. I had a huge workload in Kyung Hee and did not have enough time to go out a lot. The most important thing I learned from the Korean people is that building relationships is very important. They are very polite to each other."



Nursultan Abdukhalilov



Nazokat Omuralieva

Nazokat Omuralieva

American University in Bulgaria

First of all, AUBG's diverse student body enriched my cultural experience. I got to meet and spend time with students from almost all over Europe, the US, post-Soviet, and eastern Asian countries. I had American roommates and Belarusian and Spanish suitemates, traveled with international and local students to Varna, Melnik, Sofia, Plovdiv, and other places in Bulgaria as well as several cities in Turkey during my fall break, celebrated Halloween with the AUBG student body, and participated in an Indian Beauty Workshop. Communicating with the students from different backgrounds while doing activities together opened my mind and broadened my outlook on the world and life.

AUBG is very popular for developing future business leaders and always organizes many activities for students' professional development. For example, it held a business week during which representatives of popular companies shared their experience in their fields. Also, I got involved in the Business Start-up Program, the breast cancer campaign, and the Better Community Club.

CAREER CORNER: Interview with Arystan Moldabekov

By Dinara Atantayeva, KIMEP



Arystan Moldabekov, a U.S.-CAEF Alumnus 2011, Advanced Staff in Assurance Department/ Ernst & Young/Almaty, Treasurer/ U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association

Dinara: Arystan, recently you were a student and now you are an auditor with two years of experience. Apparently, you are the right person to give advice to our U.S.-CAEF freshmen who are challenged with the choice of their major. Many students dream about becoming an auditor and work in one of the Big 4, but very few know what this job is exactly about. I want this interview to help them clarify a few things about accounting as a major.

Arystan: Dinara, it's a great pleasure for me to be interviewed by the U.S.-CAEF Newsletter and I'm even more pleased for being able to provide assistance to our current U.S.-CAEF fellows who may have questions concerning their future studies and careers. Of course, I can't say a lot about majoring in Accounting, because I got my major in Finance, but still hope I can answer all your questions (since Accounting is my minor).

Dinara: So, Arystan, many people apt to think that accounting is not the sphere where creativity takes place. Many students usually think this way: "I am a creative person full of interesting ideas and that is why it is better for me to study marketing. And accounting is not for me, because it is based on standards and accountants should think and act within particular framework." Is it true?

Arystan: My firm belief is that any "creative person full of interesting ideas" will always find out the way to bring them in life practically in any sphere. In fact, there is a term named "creative accounting" which is used to describe various manipulations with numbers and financial figures performed by accountants, which by their nature do not violate standards or rules, but can make financial reports of the company look better than they really are. Just show your imagination: there are so many chances to use your creativity, especially at places where others are unaware of such opportunities!

Dinara: Wherever you work, especially during your first

years, there are always some difficulties you should cope with in order to get used to your new position. Can you point out what was especially difficult for you at the beginning?

Arystan: Well, maybe it relates to specifics of auditor's profession, but it was all of a sudden and quite challenging when the senior member of our team sent me to discuss some issues with a bank accountant on my first working day. I guess that was kind of a tough and at the same time funny situation, when a fresh university graduate was trying to prove to a professional bank accountant, with at least ten years of experience, that she was doing her work incorrectly. At the beginning I hated such discussions, but it ended up that today I am good friends with that accountant. And, certainly, now it is a great memory that always makes me smile.

Dinara: Everyone can be an auditor. Do you agree with this statement?

Arystan: Actually, you are the first person telling me that. But, definitely, everyone, who wants to be an auditor and makes efforts towards that, will become one. I'm convinced that U.S.-CAEF Fellows, who have been selected by the Foundation for their strong commitment and motivation in life, can make brilliant careers, if they target audit as their future profession.

Dinara: I have heard that the auditors should have very high stress resistance. According to you, what qualities are crucial for an auditor? Suppose a person does not have these qualities, is it possible for him/her to obtain them or must they be innate?

Arystan: I don't want to scare away our students, but in reality it is quite a stressful job, especially in terms of time constraints. Sometimes you are assigned to perform so many tasks that deadlines established for them seem not to match the volume of work. I remember at KIMEP a week before final exams was a very tough period, with many sleepless nights and nothing except studies. Well, it's pretty much the same, but it lasts all year round. Audit is all about learning, so as time passes you become a self-disciplined person and develop good time management skills. It makes you well organized and fosters team spirit.

Dinara: Can you state one major advantage and one major disadvantage of being an auditor?

Arystan: Your work in audit is not going to be boring, since you are not doing the same thing all the time. You may participate in audit of the bank or chocolate factory, jewelry chain stores or oil refinery plants. You may be in Shymkent today, and fly to Atyrau in two weeks. You are always on the move, which is quite attractive for young people. The flip side is that you have to trade off the time you would otherwise spent with your family or friends, less sleep and fewer weekends granted to you.

Dinara: I know about the fact that besides the work auditors are required to pass ACCA exams. How do you manage your time between working and preparing for the exams? What would be your advice on how to maintain balance between work and personal life?

Arystan: That's true. I guess all Big Four companies now require their employees to pass the ACCA examination, which I think is a great opportunity for us just to get

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



DINARA ATANTAYEVA

I am a U.S.- CAEF FELLOW and I am extremely happy and proud of this significant fact in my bio! I am a senior student at KIMEP. My majors are Accounting and Finance.

I graduated from school-gymnasium # 6 in my home town, Semei, in East Kazakhstan in 2009. I received an academic honor for excellent study at a school called Altyn Belgi (golden medal). I consider study at KIMEP to be very interesting and challenging.

Knowledge I have obtained in the spheres of accounting and corporate finance have helped me a lot to participate in the regional internship program administered by U.S.- CAEF in 2011.

this certification. It's not a promotion, but our company fully covers the examination and study material fees and grants us three-four weeks of study leave at each exam session. So, no problems here. As for the balance between work and personal life, I'm not sure if I'm the right person to give advice on that, since currently my balance is well far outweighed by work. It's just important to understand that if you got free time from work, it's better to call and meet your friends, spend time with your family, or give an interview to U.S.-CAEF Newsletter, so you can share your experience with people, who might really be interested in that.

Dinara: Thank you, Arystan, for the interview. I hope this information will be very useful for our readers. I wish you always to feel enthusiastic about your work and good luck! In case you have something to add or wish to our U.S.-CAEF fellows you are more than welcome!

Arystan: Thanks, Dinara! I wish you success in the subsequent publications of the U.S.-CAEF Newsletter that helps us and current Fellows to be in touch. I wish our U.S.-CAEF Scholars to study well and achieve all their goals in life.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION KICKS OFF WITH SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES

By Oksana Kovalenko, Vice-President for Communication, U.S.-CAEF Alumni Association

Happy New Year, dear U.S. – CAEF Family! We wish you every possible success in the upcoming year! The U.S. - CAEF Alumni Association team is glad to deliver updates on events that have been recently held and to share our future ideas and plans. Let us start with the summary of our first meeting with current fellows in Almaty on Dec 1-2, 2012. We were surprised to see so many current fellows coming to our meeting (it was snowing heavily that day); moreover, they showed high interest and enthusiasm for mutual cooperation.

During the meeting we identified points of cooperation. Below are some of the proposed events:

- Group grants – a Business Plan competition for students. Participants with the most successful and creative ideas will be provided with funds for realization.
- Visiting leading Kyrgyz and Kazakh companies
- Business games, case studies, workshops
- Sport events
- Alumni mentorship – each current fellow can choose an Alumni mentor to get help in identifying personal and professional development plans.
- Creating groups in social networks

We believe this meeting was the first major milestone for our future cooperation. We hope that you are looking forward to participating in the upcoming events!

On January 19, the Alumni Association organized their first events for current Fellows at KIMEP and AUCA—panel discussions on careers, job search and professional education. The organizers, Aisalkyn Musabaeva and Moldir Kussainova, Vice-Presidents for Social Activities, reported that the turnout at both institutions was impressive and would like to thank the panelists, our Enterprise Alumni, for their time, support and useful information they shared with the fellows:

Tangulu Diushakmatova
Audit Assitant, KPMG Kyrgyzstan

Askar Karabalev
Accounts Payable Accountant,
Kumtor Operating Co., Kyrgyzstan

Azat Saparov
Specialist, Payments Department,
Kyrgyz Investment Credit Bank (KICB)

Anastasia Chirkova
Marketing Specialist, Coca-Cola Bottlers, Kyrgyzstan

Alena Li
Project Manager, Promotank Consulting Co., Kyrgyzstan

Oksana Kovalenko
MSc in Strategic Management,
Nottingham University Business School

Arystan Moldabekov
Advanced Staff in Assurance Department
at Ernst and Young, Kazakhstan

Aidana Abdrakhmanova
Financial Analyst, Procter & Gamble, Kazakhstan

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



OKSANA KOVALENKO

I graduated from AUCA in 2011 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree and continued my education in Nottingham University Business School as a graduate student. During four years at AUCA, I was proud to be one of the U.S.-CAEF Fellows, and currently I am proud to explore a new role of being Vice-President for Communications.



WASHINGTON D.C.
1828 L Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington D.C., USA 20036
Phone: (202) 833-7522
Fax: (202) 833-7523
us-caef@americancouncilsnetwork.org

DUSHANBE
86 Tolstoy Street
Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734003
Phone: +992 37 221 1795
Fax: +992 37 221 1795
mamajanova@americancouncils-tj.org

ALMATY
20A, KAZIBEK BI STR.,
4th FLOOR
Almaty, Kazakhstan 050010
Phone: +7 727 291 9226
Fax: +7 727 259 8805
accels@americancouncils-kz.com

BISHKEK
187 Sydykov St., Office # 29,
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Phone: (996-312) 903-371
(996-312) 903-372
Fax: +996 312 66 48 38
accels@elcat.kg



"We enjoyed receiving a glimpse into our future that showed what is awaiting us. One of the lessons we got is that graduation from university is just the first step toward our goals in life and we must be ready for difficulties that we will face. We learned that it is very complicated to find an appropriate job, and that we must always develop ourselves and strive for perfection in order to be competitive in the market of professionals in the business and economics sphere. We highly appreciate the opportunity to participate in this event. It was really pleasant to understand that now because of Alumni Association we, fellows, can still remain a part of U.S.-CAEF after graduation from university"

-Malika Ibragimova, AUCA